



The Paper Modem

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Microsoft Vista

Beta 1 rollout now underway -

www.tomshardware.com

Redmond (WA) - Microsoft has officially confirmed to Tom's Hardware Guide that Vista Beta 1 has been released to subscribers to Microsoft's exclusive testing programs and to exclusive invitees.

Quoting from Microsoft's official statement released minutes ago: "With this Beta 1 release, Microsoft is encouraging Software developers,

IT professionals and Windows enthusiasts to start testing the Windows Vista platform."

"The focus of Windows Vista Beta 1," says Microsoft's official statement, "is the fundamentals - security, deployment, manageability, reliability and diagnostics. While the code also includes an early look at the new user-interface design, the majority of end-user features in Windows Vista will not be included until Beta 2. In addition to these fundamentals, Windows Vista Beta 1 also includes the Internet Explorer 7 Beta 1 built into the platform. The technical Beta of Internet Explorer 7 for Windows XP SP2 also is available".

Submitted by: Y. Bulger



Disk Crash - A typical computer response to any critical deadline.



Spam Is All Your Fault, Says Study

- By Gregg Keizer Tech Web News

We have met the enemy and he is us.

So says the Radicati Group, which Wednesday released preliminary results of a survey showing that it's bad behavior on the part of users -- us, in other words -- driving the spam and virus threat.

And you thought it was spammers and hackers.

"Frankly, it surprised us that users are still responding to [spam], and opening [unsolicited] mail," said Sarah Radicati, the chief executive of the Palo Alto, Calif.-based market research firm which conducted the online poll.

According to Radicati's survey, **31 percent** of those polled have clicked on embedded links within spam at one time or another.

"Clicking on embedded links helps spammers determine 'live' accounts, which encourages repeated spam attacks," said Radicati. And enterprises can be compromised by a single miscreant. When an active account with a domain is identified, organizations are at greater risk of follow-up directory harvest attacks.

18% of users admitted that they'd clicked on the "unsubscribe" link in spam, another behavior that's exploited by spammers, who then know the address, and perhaps the entire domain, are active and so potential targets for follow-on spam campaigns.

Even worse, spammers sell and trade lists

with virus writers eager to accumulate bots, so by telling a spammer they're "live," users increase their risk of later receiving worms and viruses.

But the most stunning statistic, said Radicati, was the last: *more than 10%* of the respondents have purchased products advertised in spam.

"With the near-zero cost of sending out huge volumes of spam, the fact that more than one in ten users are purchasing products is clearly continuing to drive the economics of spam," said Radicati.

"Although one person's spam may be another person's information," she said, "it's clear that education isn't working. Either the spam product offers are just too good to pass up, or users still have an enormous lack of awareness of the danger of clicking on e-mailed links."

Companies need to do a much better job, she said, of educating their employees. "They're not," Radicati said. "They may say 'don't do this' and 'never do that,' but there's simply not much formal training."

Our continued bad habits, she said, explains why e-mail security threats -- spam, worms, phishing -- continue to explode.

"Anti-spam technology routinely achieves 90 percent plus catch-rates, yet no technology in the world can protect an organization if users exercise bad e-mail behavior."

Submitted by: Greg Wilson



Floppy - The state of your wallet after purchasing a computer.



Helpful Hints

Understanding Cookies *Technician eNewsletter*

Some Web sites store information in a small text file on your computer. This file is called a cookie.

There are several types of cookies, and you can choose whether to allow some, none, or all of them to be saved on your computer. If you do not allow cookies at all, you may not be able to view some Web sites or take advantage of customization features (such as local news and weather, or stock quotes).

Click a heading, or press the TAB key to highlight a heading, and then press ENTER.

How cookies are used

A cookie is a file created by an Internet site to store information on your computer, such as your preferences when visiting that site. For example, if you inquire about a flight schedule at an airline's Web site, the site might create a

cookie that contains your itinerary. Or it might only contain a record of the pages you looked at within the site you visited, to help the site customize the view for you the next time you visit.

Cookies can also store personally identifiable information. Personally identifiable information is information that can be used to identify or contact you, such as your name, e-mail address, home or work address, or telephone number.

However, a Web site only has access to the personally identifiable information that you provide. For example, a Web site cannot determine your e-mail name unless you provide it. Also, a Web site cannot gain access to other information on your computer.

Once a cookie is saved on your computer, only the Web site that created the cookie can read it.

Insert a Watermark in MS Word

-Dummies Daily

In a Word document, you can add a watermark to each page. A watermark is a pale image or set of words that appears behind text on each page.

To create a text watermark choose Format->Background->Printed Watermark. You see the Printed Watermark dialog box. Next, click the Text Watermark option button and type a word or two in the Text box (or choose an AutoText entry from the drop-down list).

Choose a font, size, color, and layout for the words. If you deselect the Semi-Transparent check box, you do so at your peril because the watermark words may be too dark on the page. Click OK in the Printed Watermark dialog box to see your watermark.

To tinker with it or remove it, choose Format->Background->Printed Watermark and change the settings in the Printed Watermark dialog box. To remove the watermark, click the No Watermark option button.

Above Submitted by: Greg Wilson



Keyboard - The standard way to generate computer errors.



**Absolutely Amazing - Try Google Earth
– Explore, Search and Discover -**

Find out more at <http://kh.google.com>

Want to know more about a specific location? Dive right in -- Google Earth combines satellite imagery, maps and the power of Google Search to put the world's geographic information at your fingertips.

Fly from space to your neighborhood. Type in an address and zoom right in. Search for schools, parks, restaurants, and hotels. Get driving directions. Tilt and rotate the view to see 3D terrain and buildings. Save and share your searches and favorites. Even add your own annotations.



View of the Grand Canyon on Google Earth

More specifics about what you need to run Google Earth...

Minimum configuration:

- Operating system: Windows 2000, Windows XP
- CPU speed: Intel® Pentium® PIII 500 MHz
- System memory (RAM): 128MB
- 200MB hard-disk space
- 3D graphics card: 3D-capable video card with 16MB **VRAM**
- 1024x768, 32-bit true color screen
- Network speed: 128 kbps ("Broadband/Cable Internet")

Recommended configuration:

- Operating system: Windows XP
- CPU speed: Intel® Pentium® P4 2.4GHz+ or AMD 2400xp+
- System memory (RAM): 512MB
- 2GB hard-disk space
- 3D graphics card: 3D-capable video card with 32MB VRAM or greater
- 1280x1024, 32-bit true color screen
- Network speed: 128 kbps ("Broadband/Cable Internet")

Submitted By: G. Bulger

State-of-the-art - Any computer you can't afford.





Buying a Digital Camera?

Play your cards right Do your homework

— Steve Makris — *The Edmonton Journal*

Finding the right digital camera can be a challenge. Even seasoned owners find it confusing when they upgrade to newer models.

Every year, dozens of new cameras priced from \$100 to \$1,500, with new features, shapes and the all-important megapixel count, compete for your hard-earned dollar and technical prowess.

What to look for:

Megapixel number: Higher numbers mean better picture quality and larger prints. For Internet-use only, a two-megapixel camera will do, while three-megapixel cameras are sufficient for album-size prints. Home ink jet printers don't require as many megapixels for enlargements as photo labs, so while a four-megapixel camera will make good 8x10 prints, a similar size photo lab print will look better from a five-megapixel camera.

Zoom Lens: Most digital cameras come with "optical" 3X zoom lenses. This means the camera can close on a subject three times closer with no loss of picture quality. Digital camera lenses also feature digital zoom, extending the magnification beyond the optical but with increasing loss of picture quality. Cameras with larger optical zoom lenses are heavier, bulkier and more expensive.

Viewfinder:

The camera's LCD screen lets you see pictures before and after you take them. The larger its pixel count -- 130,000 on the average digital camera -- the sharper the images you

see. Today's top sellers feature 2.5-inch high-resolution screens, making it easier to check your photos or even show them from the camera.

Video: A handy feature if you don't have a movie camcorder around. The best digital cameras shoot full motion, 30 frames per second, 640x480 resolution (similar to VHS quality) and mono sound for a few seconds or several minutes depending on the size of the memory card. Cheaper or older models shoot lower resolution -- 320x240 or less -- at a choppy 10 frames per second. Some cameras also let you zoom while in recording movie mode.

How to Choose

Retail outlets today focus on the intended purpose of the digital camera. If you are investing several hundred bucks for a new digital, do some homework -- read photo magazines, go online and spend time with a patient salesperson.

Digital outsells film, but even top-end eight-megapixel cameras have a tough time matching the richness and contrast range of film-based point-and-shoots, at a fraction of the price.

That said, the immediacy of digital, computers and the Internet offer unlimited possibilities in photography, at home or while you travel.

Once you know what you want, the final deciding factor is how comfortable the camera feels -- are the control buttons and dials in the right place, and do the shape and weight feel right?

It's best to wait for a few months when a new digital camera hits the market. More often than not, their prices drop as they settle into the competitive market scene.

Submitted by: Y. Bulger



Syntax Error - Hi, I want to buy a computer and money is no object.

Computing Gidgets & Gadgets

Backpack makes toting a laptop a breeze

Murray Hill - Saskatoon StarPhoenix

If you have a full-sized laptop and are unfortunate enough to have to travel with the computer, then the KENSINGTON COUNTOUR BACKPACK might be just what you're looking for.

Whenever I travel I take my laptop along and boy, on a long trip it's a real pain to haul that computer and all the peripherals I take around. I've tried regular computer bags in a myriad of sizes and styles and haven't been happy. I tried a roller bag, which is essentially a standard computer bag with a handle that extends and wheels. They're very heavy on their own, but they really can make the trip a lot easier to take if you're carrying a load.

The best thing I've found is a backpack computer bag, and after even trying a few of those, the latest one from Kensington is my favourite. I've found that carrying a backpack is a lot easier to deal with than hauling a computer bag on a single strap or pulling a bag down escalators or over curbs.

Two things I really like about this backpack are the adjustable lumbar support and the wide, thoroughly padded shoulder straps. The straps really distribute the weight well and the adjustable support ensures that any one can

set the backpack up to be comfortable with a load. I routinely load the pack up with my computer and a bunch of peripherals and books. It might be a bit of a grunt to lift onto my back, but once there it's extremely comfortable.

Speaking of peripherals, there's room aplenty in this backpack. There's a pocket on the inside for your iPod, with a really cool little port to run your headphones through so you can keep the music player inside where it's safe and dry. There's a water holster and the front pocket opens to an organizer for pens, cards, papers, whatever you want to store - all nicely organized. There are a dozen or so pock-

ets or places to store your stuff and you can carry laptops up to a 17". You can carry a pile of stuff in this backpack - in comfort and safety.

It's made of military-grade ballistic nylon for protection from the world - you would have to make a real effort to puncture or cut this shell. Big, strong zippers keep everything inside where it's safe and dry, and the snugFit sleeve your precious computer fits in keeps it padded on all sides. The SnugFit sleeve uses Kensington's Drop-Shield high density padding to keep your computer safe in case of an accident. There's lots of padding between you and the computer, which makes for a very comfortable backpack to wear.

You can pick up one of these terrific Kensington Contour Backpacks for around \$120 CAD.



Computer frustrations?

Show your sentiments with this hand-painted earthenware mug with exceptional detail. 14 oz.; 3 1/2" tall. Dishwasher and microwave safe.

Online Store:

<http://www.computergear.com/frustrationmug.html>

Above Submitted by: Y. Bulger



Mouse - An advanced input device to make computer errors easier to generate.



Just for Laughs

10 LAWS OF COMPUTING

1. When computing, whatever happens, behave as though you meant it to happen.
2. When you get to the point where you really understand your computer, it's probably obsolete.
3. The first place to look for information is in the section of the manual where you'd least expect to find it.
4. When the going gets tough, upgrade.
5. For every action, there is an equal and opposite malfunction.
6. To err is human...to blame your computer for your mistakes is even more human, its downright natural.
7. He who laughs last, probably has a back-up.
8. The number one cause of computer problems is computer solutions.
9. A complex system that doesn't work is invariably found to have evolved from a simpler system that worked just fine.
10. A computer program will always do what you tell it to do, but rarely what you want it to do.

COMPUTER PROVERBS

- Home is where you hang your @.
- The E-mail of the species is more deadly than the mail.
- A journey of a thousand sites begins with a single click.
- You can't teach a new mouse old clicks.
- C:\ is the root of all directories.
- Don't put all your hopes in one home page.
- Pentium wise; pen and paper foolish.
- The modem is the message.
- Too many clicks spoil the browse.
- The geek shall inherit the earth.
- A chat has nine lives
- Don't byte off more than you can view .
- What boots up must come down.
- Windows will never cease.
- Virtual reality is its own reward.
- Know what to expect before you connect.
- Oh, what a tangled website we weave when first we practice.
- Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day, teach him to use the Net and he won't bother you for weeks.

Submitted by: Y. Bulger



System Update - A quick method of trashing ALL of your software.





Welcome
to Windows Update

Microsoft braces for user backlash over downloads

By Simon Avery - *Toronto Globe and Mail*

The next time you visit the Web site of Microsoft Corp. to download some software, be prepared to let the world's biggest software company have a look inside your computer.

In a determined strike to quell the proliferation of counterfeit software, Microsoft is now requiring that all customers coming to its Web site for upgrades and other downloads submit their computers to an electronic frisking.

If you use one of the estimated 100 million PCs running pirated software, don't expect your upgrade. For Microsoft, the new policy is a stepped-up effort to combat the loss of billions of dollars' worth of software sales every year to counterfeiters around the world. But in ramping up efforts to fight piracy, the Redmond, Wash.-based behemoth already finds itself fending off critics over privacy.

"It sets an extremely negative precedent," Pam Dixon, executive director of World Privacy Forum, a non-profit public-interest research center in San Diego, said of the company's initiative. "Microsoft is saying, 'Before I let you do anything at all, you have to open your computer to us.' I really object to this."

The company will scan machines for a variety of information, including product keys or software authorization codes, operating-system version and details on the flow of data between the operating system and other hardware, such as printers.

It is access to this information that particularly upsets the privacy advocates. Dixon says the only information Microsoft needs to fight piracy is the product key and the operating-system version, and she says that Microsoft will be able to identify users uniquely based on some of the information the company collects.

"They are grabbing more information than they need to deter piracy," she said.

If Microsoft deems a PC to be carrying contraband code, it won't allow a user to download Microsoft programs, with the exception of security patches. But the software company – which says that more than one in five U.S. computers runs a counterfeit version of its Windows product – is not just waving a stick. It is also offering a big carrot.

Microsoft said it will give a free copy of its Windows XP to customers who unknowingly bought a counterfeit version of the operating system and who fill out a piracy report, provide proof of purchase and send Microsoft the counterfeit CDs.

Customers who cannot provide proof of purchase but file a piracy report will receive a substantial discount on a legitimate version of the operating system, said Tim Prime, a product manager in the Windows client group at Microsoft Canada Co., a subsidiary of the U.S. company.

Executives at Microsoft reject any suggestions that the move will antagonize customers with privacy concerns.

"Customers want to know whether retailers have sold them genuine software," Prime said.

Submitted By: Y. Bulger



The End